



ADDRESS OF

WILLIAM TYNDALE JENNINGS

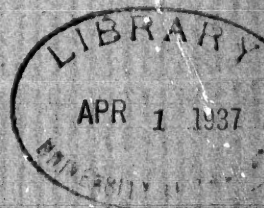
PRESIDENT

Canadian Society of Civil Engineers,

— AT THE —

ANNUAL MEETING

JANUARY 31ST, 1900.



Canadian Society of Civil Engineers.

ADDRESS OF WILLIAM TYNDALE JENNINGS, PRESIDENT, 1899.

Toronto, 26th January, 1900.

To the Officers and Members of the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers.

GENTLEMEN,—

On retiring from office I take this opportunity of again thanking the Society for the high honour conferred in electing me to the Presidential Chair, and to express regret at my inability to have given the duties of the office the full attention they demanded.

However, if not frequently in attendance, I have had the Society and its objects fully in mind, and my constant desire has been to see the Society attain a position where from its standing and activity in the advancement of scientific education, coupled with wise regulations and a high standard of ethics, it will command the hearty support of engineers in all branches of the profession and also the respect of the public at large.

Referring to our inception, formation and advancement, I may briefly remind you that the Society was established by a Dominion Government charter early in 1887 "for the object and purpose of facilitating the acquirement and interchange of professional knowledge among its members, and more particularly to promote the acquisition of that species of knowledge which has special reference to the profession of civil engineering, and, further, to encourage investigation in connection with all branches and departments of knowledge connected with the profession."

The Society was also empowered "to acquire and hold all land and property necessary and requisite in order to carry out the objects and purpose for which incorporation was sought."

The numerical strength of the Society during the first year (1887) was as follows:—

- 188 Members,
- 45 Associate Members,
- 19 Associates,
- 83 Students,

President's Address.

In all a total of 335 Members.

During the same year the sum of \$2,480.77 was paid in to the Treasurer, principally on account of annual subscriptions.

From the Secretary's returns it appears that the membership for 1899 numbered as follows:--

7 Honorary Members,
308 Members,
289 Associate Members,
40 Associates,
203 Students.

In all a grand total of 847 members, and showing a total net increase since the year of the formation of the Society of 512 members of all grades, while the receipts from entrance and annual fees, etc., amounted to \$5,141.53. This sum, added to the amount of \$5,893.22, brought forward from general fund account, makes a total credit balance at the end of 1899 of \$11,034.75, which sum has, as you will notice in the Treasurer's statement, been largely drawn upon for building account.

Permanent withdrawals from membership have been few, and due in most instances to removal from the country.

Removals by death have cost us many worthy members, among whom we sincerely regret Honorary Member Sir John William Dawson, C.M.G., LL.D., and two Past-Presidents, namely, Mr. Samuel Keefer and Sir Casimir Gzowski. Mr. Walter Shanly may also be included in the number of Past-Presidents, as he was on several occasions offered the nomination, but invariably declined. As is well known, these gentlemen were of the highest professional and social standing, and heartily entered into the scheme for the formation of the Society, and did their part nobly to advance all its interests from the date of its formation up to the time of their decease.

Others have departed who, although perhaps not as prominent before the public and in our midst, acquitted themselves honourably in the profession and faithfully as members.

The Society having carried out the second provision in its charter, is now to be congratulated on the acquisition of its own premises (as referred to in the Treasurer's report), at a total estimated cost for

Improvements, etc.. . . .	\$8,846.75
Building and land.. . .	\$8,011.30
	\$16,858.05

Of this amount there has been obtained by special subscriptions from members and friends the sum of \$8,259.17.

The balance of \$8,598.88 has been temporarily provided for by loan from the general funds of the Society.

It is confidently hoped that monetary aid sufficient to extinguish the whole building account item of \$16,858.05 will be secured, thereby enabling the Society to apply moneys now temporarily loaned from the general funds to other useful purposes, notably the enlargement of the Reference Library, which is now valued at \$3,750.00, or, with furniture and fittings at a total of, say, \$5,000.00, all of which can be inexpensively removed to our own premises, which it is hoped will be ready for occupation by the first of May next.

The benefit to be derived from having one's own professional home will doubtless strike every member as the beau ideal of seclusion and comfort. We now know that we have a headquarters, where we can meet and discuss topics of professional interest, or where we may individually rest by times when here.

It has been stated by some of our members that the establishment has involved too great an expenditure, and that only local members would profit by it. I would remind these gentlemen, that, as before stated, a large proportion of the cost was subscribed by members and friends for this particular purpose, and which the Society has had in contemplation from the outset.

I am satisfied we will do more individually and collectively in this way in the near future, and that we will doubtless soon have the pleasing duty of determining whether our surplus funds are to be devoted to the wider distribution of engineering information beyond that emanating from papers by our own members, or expend it in additions to our Reference Library, or, finally, stop the accumulation of funds by decreasing the annual subscription fee.

I cannot think that the latter course would meet with the general sanction of the members, because, as time wears on, coupled with the general growth of the country, an ever-increasing demand will make it imperative that our members be promptly informed of the latest engineering advances.

However, as we have not yet reached that stage, it is unnecessary to further enlarge on the subject, and I only mention the matter as food for thought and discussion later on.

As to the second part of the assertion, that only local members would really profit by the establishment of our home, I may say that such must necessarily be to some extent the case, and we who are not at headquarters can only hope that those who are so fortunately situated will take full advantage of the opportunities afforded. Members should look on this feature in a broad light, and recognize that, while distant from the home, yet the advantages of it are apparent, in that the Library is open to us should we at any time desire information as recorded in our reference volumes, by simply making application to the Secretary for the loan of the

required work, which, if too voluminous to transmit, and the subject matter required not too extensive, there is no reason why arrangements should not be made for its transcription and transmission to the applicant.

In this and many other ways can the "home" be made a bond of usefulness to the members of the Society, while its firm establishment means that the Canadian Society of Engineers has become a permanent and fully recognized institution of the country.

The advancement of Economic Mining has had the effect of attracting experienced mining engineers to the country, and of inducing a large number of students to take up that branch of the profession, with the result that a separate Society, called the Canadian Mining Institute has been successfully formed, and, as it is desirable that all branches of engineering should be embraced in the Canadian Society of Engineers, it is hoped that this valuable branch will be united with us in the near future.

Acknowledgment as a corporate body has been obtained from the Legislatures of the Provinces of Quebec and Manitoba. An effort has been made in the same direction in the Province of Ontario, but so far without success.

It is, however, hoped that substantial advancement will be made in this respect during the coming session of the Ontario Legislature, and it is not difficult to see that the carrying out of the provisions in our bill will not only benefit the profession and the operative, but also assist all intelligent and well-disposed persons by the elevation of the educational standard and general proficiency of the civil engineering profession of this country.

In connection with our desire for Provincial incorporation, it has been stated, by those opposed to the measure, that our common object is to thoroughly entrench ourselves behind the Act in order that we may the more successfully wage war on those now practicing who have not thought fit to ally themselves with the Society; also to legally enable us to exact enhanced fees for services, and generally to place a curb on free and untrammelled labour, be it professional or otherwise.

In reply to this and other like statements, I would briefly point out that the old days of casual study as a pupil principally carried out in the office, field or on works, and generally based on theoretical education of a more or less complete character, are almost past and gone, and while recognizing and upholding many good features in the old system, yet the near future will find only men in the profession who are graduates of schools of engineering or of this Society.

Therefore (while not wishing to interfere with any one now engaged), the Society seeks incorporation (in the Provinces) particularly for the purpose of placing the foot of the student firmly on the first rung of the

ladder by insisting that he shall have the foundation work of his profession securely laid in the form of a good academical education, and that his further ascent may be made under the guidance of experienced engineers, whose duty it will be to encourage him, until time and experience in actual service enable him to become a full corporate member, and competent to stand alone and unaided.

In the matter of fees for professional services, the Society has not made special provision, and it is desirable that a plan be formulated whereby satisfaction and uniformity may be obtained in this respect, as is customary in other professions.

When one thinks of the duties and responsibilities vested in an Executive Engineer, in charge of extensive and costly works, and often acting in a judicial capacity as between Governments, Companies or Municipalities, as against each other or contractors, and compares the returns they receive with those obtained by our judges and leaders in mercantile pursuits, we certainly cannot be charged with placing a high estimate on ourselves.

As to interference with skilled or ordinary labour, I hold that the reverse is the case, as by the better and more systematic education of our engineers we create a competent force to guide and assist skilled artisans and mechanics, in advancing their interests, either as inventors, operators or overseers, of the labouring masses, who thereby cannot fail to obtain improved conditions.

As an index of this feature, it is only necessary to point to the valuable assistance rendered by schools of technology in Europe, and on this Continent, where the ordinary mechanic may, by evening study under engineers, chemists and other suitable professors, secure for a trifling sum such knowledge of a scientific character as will enable him the more clearly and effectively to study out and improve upon present machinery and methods of manufacture, and generally bring under the control of the hand of man the powers and material of the physical world.

The ethical principles which should be observed between members are not difficult to determine, and may be summed up in the tenets of the "Golden Rule," and are largely provided for in our by-laws. It has, however, been suggested that members enjoying permanent positions, and whose compensation is in consideration of the occupation of their whole time, should discontinue outside professional practice in so far as the interests of the country or municipality will permit.

It is to be hoped that the "transactions" of the Society will be increased in volume by the addition of articles other than those emanating from members of our own Society.

I have thus briefly touched upon Society matters rather than those of a specifically engineering character, as has been the cus-

tom heretofore by retiring Presidents, feeling that at this time, when we are entering upon a new and more extended era, it would appear advisable that our members should be reminded of the objects of the Society, and of the duties and obligations of its members to the public, and to each other in order that we may the more fully understand our position.

In concluding, I can only express a hope that our efforts will continue to meet with success, and that each member will personally feel that the Society is of real value, and of benefit to our country.

